Cosmic Rays

ACCORDING to Dr. Arthur H. Compton, noted physicist, cosmic rays are electrically charged vagrants of space shooting earthward from remote distances, wavering as they approach the lower strata of the earth's atmosphere, and then speeding along definite aerial routes to the poles of the earth. Simple, isn't it? Like all representations of scientific phenomena this definition is merely a rough picture, to be redrawn and revised as investigation proceeds.

Dr. Compton's concept of cosmic rays is based on observations made at widely scattered points in the western hemisphere that the intensity of the rays is greater at the poles than at the magnetic equotor and increases continuously at higher altitudes. These observations, Dr. Compton tells us, support the hypothesis that cosmic rays are not protons, particles of non-electric radiation such as heat and light, but are electrical in nature. As they approach the earth the rays are influenced by the earth's magnetism and speed to the poles.

As time goes on more and more scientists are paying attention to the cosmic rays. The most recent spectacular inquiry is Professor Piccard's strathosphere expedition. Some savants hold the theory that these mysterious rays are causing our planet to grow in mass and size. Whatever cosmic rays may be and do, there is reason to suspect that they affect our earth, and it behooves us to find out how, if we can. When more has been learned about their nature our engineers may find a way to put them, with other forces of nature, to work for the benefit of the human race. —F. H. T.